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A JOURNAL DEVOTED TO CULTURE AND PROGRESS

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24 JAN 1940
MADRAS

EDITOR H. D. RAJAH.

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The New Age

VOL. IV JULY 1937 NO 2.

INDIAN NATIONALISM IN ITS INTERNATIONAL SETTING.

By S. Batlivala.

Introduction.

It is the task of the present article to indicate some of the bearings of the international situation in the world to—day on the struggle for the economic and political emancipation in India.

What significance for example has the growing Peoples' Front against War and against Fascism in Europe to do with us?

There are signs even amongst some of the most militant sections of the Anti—Imperialist movement of a serious misunderstanding of the international aspect of India's struggle for freedom. We demonstrate our solidarity with the exploited colonial peoples of China, South America, and Africa, with the People of Spain in their fight against Fascism, because we feel that they like us are the victims of fascist and imperialist aggression. But to many the significance of such demonstrations amounts to little more than an expression of our common bond of sympathy. We have not realised how much the future of India's National struggle is bound up with the international and inter-class struggles that are going on in the world outside and are reflected in dramatic events that follow one another in rapid succession particularly in Europe.

On the other hand there is a certain fatalist tendency which appears to rely on external forces in shaping our immediate destiny.

War is inevitable under "capitalism." "Any way we want to see British Imperialism smashed. We do not mind who smashes it, so long as this gives us our chance of victory. It wont hurt us if Rome, Tokio, Berlin and london wipe each other off the map." Such are the thoughts of many towards the meance of War in Europe. that looms ever larger and larger.

War in Europe.

India cannot escape any more than she did in 1914 the issues that are confronting the peoples of every country in the world, at the present time closely bound as she is by every political and economic bond to the fate of Europe and of Britain in particular.

Nevertheless whatever the outcome of events in the world at large, the

outcome for India will be determined by her own people. We must face the issues that have been becoming ever sharper and more clearly defined since the War of 1914—1918.

How does the situation to-day compare with that of War and Post—War period?

The Indian people like the masses of many other countries were begulied of a better world— of "a good time coming".

The night—mare of wholesale murder and destruction was over, War having been renounced by every country in the world, was a thing of the savage past. Civilisation was taking in hand the task of creating a new and better world—"a world safe for democracy," a world in which force, oppression, exploitation would find no place—a world in which there would be peace brotherhood and equality amongst the nations of the world. The colonial system was denounced by the victorious Imperialist Powers. The "Mandatory" system was introduced. There would be "self-determination" for the colonial peoples. India in particular was to be given self-government. In short the capitalist order was represented as a "growingly harmonious and organised system of world production."

In fact however it has been forcefully brought home to the "common people" of every country that the capitalist world is a growingly violent system of antagonisms.

The history of the last two decades has proved that the war solved nothing but served only to intensify the fundamental antagonisms of rival Empires, of monopolist groups and "expansionist" powers.

The enormous increase in world production during the post war "boom" period resulted in an increasing concentration of-capital in the hands of these rival monopolist groups. Banks, Trusts, Combines, leading first to wide scale rationalisation of Industrial Production and Distribution and then to ever more intense conflict between these groups in their struggle for exclusive control of markets and fields for investment of their capital as well as for access to free raw materials in undeveloped countries. It is not merely a question of "commercial competition" but of more and more fundamental rivalry between highly organised state using every weapon of diplomatic intrigue, currency and tarrif wars, leading towards rearmament and resorting to armed force.

The crisis of 1931 laid bare these contradictions and shattered the illusions of capitalism as a peaceful and harmonious system of world production. Its devastating effects spread to every country in the capitalist world. There was wholesale destruction of crops and "planned" limitation of production, accompanied by rapid impoverishment of the masses, lowered wages and increasing unemployment. Preparation was immediately begun for a redivision of the world by force of arms.

"The crisis of 1931 revealed the fundamental contradiction and inequalities of capitalism growing continually greater. The rich grow richer and the poor grow poorer. The capitalist nations and States become increasingly differentiated to the more and the less successful for the division of the world, with a growing gulf between them and a continual diminution in the ranks of the independent exploiter states, as nation after nation becomes openly or hiddenly subject to the stronger." Abyssinia, Austria and the central European states are perhaps the most obvious cases in point.

On the other hand there has been a steadily rising tide of mass revolt against the consequences of capitalist crisis for the working class. The Birth, Death, and Public Health statistics toll a grimly realistic story of the ravages on human life caused by the economic anarchy of capitalism, the

break up of hundreds of thousands of homes, the hopelessness of life for millions of unemployed men and women, the death of the workers' children and child bearing mothers through exhaustion, exposure, and under-nourishment, the steady degenration of working class physique through "speeding up" decreasing wages and higher cost of living. In one country after another the bourgeoisie have been forced to face the fact that they can no longer secure a majority for the continuance of the capitalist system. The rise of fascism is revealing to the masses in the hard school of experience that a system which depends on freedom to exploit them can only maintain its existence by destroying the hardly won democratic liberties of the people by recourse to more and more ruthless suppression of the toiling masses.

In short then *we are faced not with a world promising people prosperity and civilised order, not with a world made "safe for-democracy" for freedom and equality amongst the nations of the world,but rather with a world moving forward at ever quickening pace towards growing crisis and ever more violent collisions-of class forces on the one hand and inter imperialist rivalries on the other.*

Looking back over the events of the last two decades we see the promised march of progress—the splendid cavalcade of capitalism towards a new and better world "fit for heroes to live in" degenerating into a chaotic headlong race towards rearmament and war.

The chaotic history of capitalist "development" during the last twenty years reflects a social order torn between violently conflicting forces, economic, political, social, and ideological, a world moving forward at an ever accelerating pace towards the second round of wars and revolutions, an ever sharpening conflict of inter-imperialist rivalries on the one hand and a steadily advancing tide of mass revolt on the other, against the economic social and political bankruptcy of the capitalist system.

In the sequence of events of these years we see portrayed two worlds-a capitalist world seething with internal conflict and a socialist world in process of building on new social and economic foundations. An old dying world spelling with economic enslavement for the people and threatening universal death and terror in a desperate attempt to prolong its life-a world dominated by a system of production of property and social relationships which it has long since outgrown.

And we see a new world already reaching the stature of manhood in the USSR—a young world flushed and exhilarated with successes already achieved.

When we come to contrast the situation as it exists to day with that which prevailed in the war and post war period we can see the transformation that has come about in the social and political arena during these two decades.

Great Britain has been feeling more and more the force of foreign competition both within the Empire and outside it. This became apparent at the time of the Ottawa conference when attempts were made to erect an artificial barrier round the Empire in the form of "Imperial preference" with the object of protecting British interests in her own colonies and dominions. It was revealed for example that the U.S. had gained control of as much of the export trade within the Empire as Britain herself. With Canada it had reached four and a half times the value of the British export trade. The temporary effects of Ottawa however only served to provoke retaliatory tarriffs and hence to make Britain even more dependent on her Empire.

While the dominions continue to show a tendency towards greater economic independence Britain is driven to bind her colonies particularly India

more closely to herself. As the Liberal Mr. Foot remarked "It is not so much a question of India needing Britain as Britain needing India"! India's New Constitution takes this fully into account. (See Part V ch. 3. and Part Vii ch 2. etc etc Govt of India Act 1935).

Outside the Empire Britain has felt the force of rival capitalist powers. Taking the U. S. as an example again we find that her export trade with China had reached by 1931 209% of Britain's trade, with Argentina it had reached 103% with Chile 155% with France 150% etc.

The U.S. and Britain are now however both feeling the force of Japanese competition, in the Pacific and in the Far and Middle East. In Central Europe an intense diplomatic struggle is being waged between the expanding forces of German and Italian Fascism, both of which threaten the economic if not the political independence of Austria, Poland, Yugo Slavia, Czehoslovakia while the so—called independent states, in other parts of the world such as Manchuoko and N. China are threatended by Japan. U. S. and Britain.

Africa and South America both threaten to become the battle ground of rival Imperialist powers seeking expansion, fresh markets, and fresh field for investment of accumulated or "frozen" capital.

Italy seeks to dominate the Mediterranean. Britain retaliates with—a strengthening of its armaments in Malta and Cyprus and through diplomatic action in Greece and in Turkey.

The main centres of conflict however are central Europe and the Far East.

The last twenty years have seen a tremendous strengthening of Imperialist antagonisms a new correlation amongst the Imperialist Powers on the one hand and a realignment and strengthening of class antagonisms on the other, which in turn affects the relationships of capitalist states.

The growth of the Popular Front Movement against Fascist Dictatorship and war which tends increasingly to be directed against the —forces of capitalism itself, which drive towards War and Fascism constitutes the gravest menace to the bourgeoisie and is resulting in a violent struggle within the ranks of the bourgeoisie itself, causing "uncertainty and instability in all foreign and internal relations".

Sections of the bourgeoisie in Austria Poland, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Holland, Greece and Spain become more and more pro fascist or pro Imperialist and are prapared to sacrifice the independence of their country in order to obtain capitalist allies in their fight against their own working class and peasantry.

Thus the Popular Front movement in Austria and Poland for example becomes a struggle for independence and against capitulation to foreign Fascism whether German or Italian. France and certain of the Central European states sense the menace of aggressive fascism and are prepared to cooperate with the Soviet Union in an effort to preserve collective security.

"The growing strength of Socialism in the Soviet Union constitutes equally —a menace to the bourgeoisie. On the one hand it holds out to the toiling masses all over the world the possibility of peace and the reconstruction of a world devastated by capitalist crisis and terrorist suppression, on the other its peace policy forms a powerful obstruction to plans for a redivision of the world by force of arms.

Thus we find the bourgeoisie of Germany Italy Poland and Japan feverishly seeking occasion to attack the Soviet Union. The British bourgeoisie is attempting to break up collective security and to disrupt the Fanco Soviet and other European pacts. It encourages German rearmament and remilitari-

sation of the Rhineland, and proposes a Western Security pact with the object of driving German expansionist intentions eastwards towards the Soviet Union. Similarly it has hitherto encouraged Japan acquiescing in the invasion of Manchuria and N China in order to strengthen the forces against the spread of communism in China so that Japan may secure a base for attck on the Soviet Union.

By thus encouraging Japanese and German agression British Imperialism hopes to see its rival imperialist powers no less than its class enemy the Soviet Union weakened in a war of mutual destruction leaving the British bourgeoisie in possession of their Empire.

In China the growing strength of the Popular Front movement has been driving the bourgeoise under the leadership of Chiang Kai Shek more and more into making alliances with Imperialism.

It will be seen from the above that as in these two decades all the old antagonisms of class forces and international contradictions have been further deepened and are returning with redoubled force to reach another climax in the second round of Imperialist wars and revolutions.

The Popular Front Movement and the Soviet Union.

We have attempted to sketch the main trends of conflict in the world of to-day as contrasted with that of the war and post-war period. The intervening period has produced a profound awakening amongst the masses of the people all over the world. In particular there has been a growing strength and revolutionary consciousness amongst the working class in every capitalist state. It is an awakening which is rapidly spreading to the lower middle class strata of the population undermining the basis of the old social order and creating an ever strengthening demand for a united front of the common people against the menace of war and fascism.

Capitalism in desperation has turned increasingly to methods of violent repression in order to maintain its stranglehold over the masses. The violent collisions of class forces that have taken place during these two decades in Italy, Germany, Austria, Poland, France, Maxico, America and now in Spain have shown that the world stands on the eve of a new series of revolutionary struggles which are likely to exercise a decisive effect on world capitalism as a whole "which may defeat the menace of a new world war or failing this will rapidly turn it to a different conclusion."

What then are the forces making for creative revolution, for the economic and social reconstruction of a world standing under imminent peril of a return to the dark Ages through the universal and indiscriminate destruction that is modern war ?

In the post war period "reformism" and social democracy formed the chief social support for capitalism. with their doctrines of gradualism and constitutionalism, they succeeded in restraining the great mass of the working class from taking effective action until the bourgeoisie seizing the initiative, launched its sudden and ruthless attacks on the working class movement in those countries where it was strongest and established its Dictatorship.

Further every conceivable device-religious idealism, racial pride, class snobbery, and the like were utilised in order to win over the lower middle classes and small peasant proprietors from making an unholy alliance with the working class.

In the period following the crisis of 1931 however millions of the lower middle classes and small peasant farmers all over the world have suffered ruin through the slump in prices occasioned by what the capitalists are pleased to call over—production, and through the increasing concentration

of capital in the hands of Big Banks Trusts and Combines which have been monopolising industrial production, trade and commerce ousting the "small, man", controlling the distribution and price of agricultural production, and even the land itself through debts and mortgages, refusing to advance credits to the small farmer except at high rates of interest and gradually driving him and his children into the ranks of the unemployed, or low scale wage earners.

The widespread economic ruin that has been spreading amongst the middle classes, despite fascist demagoguey, New Deals, credit theories etc has resulted in a growing disillusionment with all bourgeois and reformist "remedies" The nemesis that has overtaken all bourgeois attempts at stabilisation, disarmament and peace, the break-down of economic conferences, repudiation of treaty obligations-Washington, Kellogg and Locarno Pacts etc. the enormous debts being piled up on armaments for the purpose of mutual destruction, and finally the desperate and unscrupulous attacks of fascism first on Abyssinia and then on the Peoples' Government of Spain—all these have been powerful factors influencing the middle classes to look to the industrial working class as the leading force in the struggle against Dictatorship and the chaos and futility of war. The continually increasing attacks on the peoples' liberty of thought speech and association, the denial of the most elementary needs of the masses under capitalism are driving the middle classes more and more to desperation and revolt not only against the drudgery want and joylessness of life under capitalism but also against the growing menace to life itself which the people sense in the drive towards war as the capitalist way of solving its own irreconcilable contradictions. The struggle for Peace and against Dictatorship becomes more a struggle against capitalism as such, since capitalism reveals itself more and more antagonistic to the elementary human rights of the masses of the people, the right to work and live as human beings, the right to control their own lives and order their own form of Government.

An economic system which depends on the freedom of a small minority to exploit the people to control the capital resources of the country, Land, Raw Materials, Production, Distribution Factories, Railways houses etc. for their own profit, freedom to rob the workers peasants and middle class wage-earners of the fruits of their labour, can only live through violent suppression of the liberty of its toiling victims.

Such a system has long since ceased to be "progressive" or even civilised. It is a disintegrating force in the world making for anarchy and chaos.

The common people of the world in their demand for unity and solidarity in the common struggle against the menace of war learning-in the hard school of experience the necessity of mass struggle as the only way out of capitalist crisis, poverty, unemployment, and the devastation of recurring imperialist war. The United Front struggle for peace and against Fascism becomes a revolutionary struggle for the overthorow of the forces making for war as the experience of the popular Front in Spain has demonstrated, as the rise of fascism in Italy Germany and Austria had already proved.

Under these circumstances the bourgeoisie of certain countries has an ever increasing dread of the growing determination of its own population and are seeking to vent their hatred and anger on the Soviet Union. Under no circumstances can they admit that the chaos of the capitalist world is of their own making or their inability to solve their own economic and social problem of securing Bread Peace and Work for the masses of their own country. Under no circumstances can they

admit the truth that the people are being driven to unite in face of the growing menace to their very existence.

The United Front is not dictated by the essential needs of the people by the conditions of poverty and misery which capitalism imposes on them; no, the United Front movement is a "Moscow manoeuvre" is dictated by Soviet Foreign policy etc. etc! The The Spanish civil war is not a militarist attack on the People of Spain supported by German and Italian fascism but a "revolution engineered by Moscow!" The absurdity of such arguments is too apparent to be worth arguing about. There is a certain irony in the accusation which we in India are particularly able to appreciate in view of the dismal failure of the British to "engineer" a United Popular Front in this country in favour of its New Constitution !

Such arguments represent a bourgeois travesty of the dialectics of class-struggle, of the truth that the vital interests of the toiling masses all over the world are identical, whether in respect of their defence against the onslaughts of capitalist exploitation and suppression in their own country or in respect of a capitalist act of aggression against the socialist order that is being built up in the Soviet Union.

Both constitute the desperate attempts of the bourgeoisie to save its own class domination to disrupt the forces making for a new social order free from the restrictions and extortions of Rent, Interest and Profit on which alone they maintain their existence.

To the common people of the world however the Soviet Union stands out more and more as a stronghold of peace in the midst of alien forces that are driving them blindly towards war. The hatred of the fascist and pro-fascist bourgeoisie therefore is directed more and more against the Soviet Union because as stated above its peace policy forms a barrier to their expansionist aims, their nefarious plans for a redivision of the world by force of arms. On the other hand it represents the hopes and aspirations of their own toiling masses.

The common bond of hatred against the Soviet Union however is only a temporary bond uniting the fascist and pro-fascist bourgeoisie. It in no way solves the fundamental contradictions which exist between them both in respect of their expansionist aims in Europe and also in the colonial countries of the world. Their preparations for war are not confined to an intention to attack the Soviet Union. Germany also fortifies the Rhineland, demands the return of her colonies in Africa. Italy openly expresses her intentions of controlling the whole of the Mediterranean. Japan demands the suzerainty of the whole of the Far East as her "natural right". Britain replies by strengthening her fortifiications in the Mediterranean and in Singapore. The U.S. waits for a favourable opportunity to attack Japan and presses for an alliance with Britain in respect of the control of the Pacific.

It is beyond the scope of this to attempt any estimation of the relative strength of the various forces making for war and the power of the United Front movements making for peace, nor can any attempt be made here to forecast the consequences in the event of war breaking out. Perhaps enough has been said to show that it would rapidly be brought to a conclusion very different from that envisaged by the bourgeoisie though only at the cost of incalculable damage to human life and human institutions.

There is not one of the Big Powers whose internal conditions offer any security for the future in the event of an out break of large scale war. Neither victory nor defeat would increase that security, rather would it spread increasing disillusionment amongst ever wider strata of the population as

witnessed in the internal effects of the Italian "victory" over Abyssinia, the mass trials and other signs of increasing desperation amongst the people.

Meanwhile every year, every month that war is delayed sees a gathering of strength and unity amongst the forces making for peace and for creative revolution as the only ultimate alternative to capitalist crisis and the unimaginable horrors of recurring war.

The Soviet Union has been steadily rising in power and political influence in the world offering a concrete demonstration to all the toiling masses to all who are disillusioned with the capitalist world around them of how a world socialist order can be achieved which will be free from the savage antagonisms and inequalities of the capitalist system. Already the working class is on the march towards its dialectical goal. The Red banners of Proletarian Revolution are summoning the masess for the decisive conflicts that lie ahead between the creative forces in the world and the forces of Death, Anarchy and Decay.

The Popular Front in India

Similarly there is striking evidence on all hands of the growing power of new social forces in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, in China, in India in Africa in South America. Soviet China has shown the way in leading a United Front of the peoples of China against Japanese aggression. Her example is being eagerly followed in the near and middle East, in Africa, in Central and South America, while here in India there are signs of a new upsurge of the revolutionary movement, a growing demand for Unity and a programme of militant struggle against Imperialism.

Here in India we cannot isolate ourselves from the situation of world capitalist economy of which India forms an integral part, so far as Great Britain and the future of the British Empire is concerned a vitally integral part-the main economic prop on which the whole structure of British Imperialism relies more and more. When we talk so glibly of war and its possible consequences for India we have to remember for example that certain native capitalists in this country made enormous profits during the last war and secured some valuable concessions for itself from Imperialism that despite the fact these were later withdrawn the granting of them was a powerful factor inducing them to come to terms with Imperialism. Also we have to remember that the toiling masses of India are still paying heavily for the cost of the last war. A large proportion of the Land Revenue which is yearly extracted from them is devoted to the payment of interest on debts incurred during the Great War. we must understand that another war would mean for India renewed suppression of the peoples rights, the commandeering of crops transport and industrial plant in order to feed the war machine, conscription of labour corps etc etc in the service of British interests.

We must then approach the struggle that lies ahead of us with a programme and tactics that take account of the international setting in which this struggle will be waged.

Such a programme must include active resistance to Imperialist war, while at the same time it must utilise every contradiction that exists both between rival Imperialist powers and between British and Indian capitalism. It must seek its allies not in imperialist Powers however hostile to British Imperialism but in the world wide forces of revolution which fight for the overthrow of Imperialism. It must be remembered too that the course of international events will itself undoubtedly exercise a decisive effect on the programme and tacticsof the Indian struggle for freedom.

Not only in the future but here in the present this struggle is vitally affected by the contradictions arising

out of those international and inter—class relationships described above.

We must not rest content with passing a resolution against cooperating in an Imperialist War, against voting credits for war purposes or contributing to War Loans.

We must carry out intensive agitation against the payments—of debts arising out of the last Imperialist war against the shipments of war materials to Britain for this purpose at the present time.

It is not enough to "warn the country" in the words of the Faizpur resolution "against the grave danger of Indian man power and resources being utilised for the purposes of British Imperialism". We must put forward the positive demand of adequate provisions for the Peoples' self—defence.

We should be gravely mistaken if we imagined that in another war our cities particularly our sea—ports would be out of range of modern aircraft carriers submarines or long range bombing planes. Our cities, particularly the poorer quarters are so constructed that two or three of the new incendiary bombs would turn whole areas into a raging furnace and might well mean the almost complete annihilation of the civil population.

While vast sums are spent on the defence of certain strategic ports such as Hong Kong and Singapore the civil population of our seaports with their vast working class areas remain almost entirely defenceless against naval or air attack. We must demand for our self—defence not increased expenditure on a foreign army and Navy to protect us but the military training of our Youth the right to organise and train the civil population of our cities in measures of defence against attack.

While we must oppose any tendency towards a fatalist reliance on War to secure India's Freedom we must prepare our People for action in the event of war breaking out. This we can best do by organising anti—war demonstrations now demanding these rights of self-defence.

While we shall utilise the contradictions arising out of inter-Imperialist rivalries to strengthten our demands for India's Freedom we should fully understand that our strength depends not so much on these factors as on the extent to which the Anti—Imperialist Movement is rooted and grounded in the masses.

When we speak of a United National Front we should realise that the strength of such a Popular Front against Dictatorship and War in a colonial country such as ours quite as much as in a democratic country such as France depends on the extent to which the mases in their localities-local and district organisations are drawn into active participation in the movement, the extent to which the major issues confronting the movement are linked up with their own day to day struggle, their own most urgent needs.

This is one of the most important lessons that world history of the last two decades has to teach us—a lesson which we in India have not yet by any means thoroughly learned.

Outr politics our Ideas are for mass consumption. They have to be sewn widespread in terms that the masses can understand, where they will take root and germinate and grow into a mighty mass movement.

No amount of resolutions or paper schemes however radical, no amount of parliamentary intrigue or political manoeuvres by the "top" however ingenious can take the place of this rooting and grounding of our movement in the masses until they arise in millions from their slumber to break the chains of Imperialism that bind them to an old dying world Dictatorship and War.

Thus Swaraj for the Indian Peasant will be shown to mean Freedom from his own grinding poverty and oppression freedom from the increasing exactions of rent taxes and debts, for the worker it will similarly mean freedom trom the state of serfdom in which he is at present bound down, freedom from the restrictions that are imposed upon his right to strike for the improvement of his conditions, his rates of pay, hours of work etc. For the Student it will mean freedom to live and think and above all to work as a free man for the good of his own country and people and not by the grace of the Imperialist God who demands a loyal submission to his own code of political behaviour as a precondition to employment. For the Women of India it will mean their emancipation and the prospect too of bringing men into the world as opposed to under nourished serfs and unemployed dependments. etc etc etc.

At present however the structure and organisation of our National Congress is very far from achieving this essential integration of the major issues confronting the Independence Movement with the vital needs of the masses, and the result has been a serious weakening of our movement, a failure to call forth that mass enthusiasm and driving energy which characterises the Peoples' Front in France and in Spain e.g.

Nevertheless the Faizpur session of the Congress and the All India Kisan Conference shows that we are on the way to-wards an understanding of this.

Resolution no. 13. on "the Congress Constitution and mass contacts" indicates as much.

The time has now come to ask "what has actually been done?" How many of these "primary committees have been established in the villages, mohallas, and the wards of towns?" Are members of the primary com-

mittees "meeting to review their own work to consider local problems and grievances and to consider the policy and programme before the Congress?" What have been the results of their reports and recommendations to the higher committees? What are the findings of the Mass Contact Committee set up under the terms of reference of this resolution? How are we going to put them into effect? It is difficult to see how we are really going to achieve the objective outlined in the Resolution namely "increasing the association of the masses" with this organisation without adopting the proposals put forward some time ago by Dutt and Bradley for collective Affiliation of other organisations Trades Unions peasant unions youth and student associations etc to the Congress to comprise a wide National Front.

But unless and until we are able to adopt this suggestion what are we to do? Can we not call forth some initiative from the lower organs of the Congress organisation by entrusting to them the task of seeking agreement and combined action with other organisaiions in their own districts etc in matter of their specific grievances in their own localities in educational centres they could approach the student organisations for their support on such issues. In the towns the local organisations might approach the Trade Unions and other political parties or even communal organisations where there is common ground for agreement.

Such agreements would no doubt simultaneously or in course of time find their counterpart in the Legislatures on specifiic issues that will be constantly arising there whether it be the promotion of some progressive measure initiated by one or the other party, or it might be the repeal of certain repressive legislation the release of detenus etc.

Whether such measures are likely to be passed or not is not the point. When there is a factor which can serve our purpose of drawing the masses together we should utilise such factors that make towards unity.

But primarily it is a question of mobilising the broadest sections of the masses in the struggle that lies ahead of us, in the period of gathering storm, of national and international crisis that we are even now entering.

We must no longer waste the valuable time and opportunities that still remain for building up our strength for a militant programme of mass struggle against Imperialism. and for independence.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE SHARPENS IN AMERICA

By Niharendu Dutta-Mazumdar, Bar-at-Law, M.L.A.

(Mr. N. Dutta-Mazumdar is a well known labour leader of Bengal who has risen to prominence by his devotion and hard work in the interests of the workers and peasants of Bengal. He is one of the founders and the present Treasurer of the Bengal Labour Party. He is a member of the All-India Congress Committee, and was returned in the last elections from the factory Labour constituency of Barrackpore to the Bengal Assembly by an overwhelming majority. Mr. Dutta-Mazumdar has been a frequent contributor to this journal and, we hope, will continue this interest in the future.)

One does not like to be told of an impending disaster or of an inevitable catastrophe lurking ahead. Therefore it is not surprising that Marx was despised and ignored by the Bourgeoisie; for while he had spoken of their gradual rise and rapid development, he had at the same time also foretold of their ultimate and inevitable collapse. They say, 'Forewarned is forearmed', but one cannot stay the inevitable by mere wish-fulfilment. And Marx's prophesies were based on carefully and scientifically worked out economic theories.

In the days of Marx Capitalism was in the ascendence, and the bourgeoisie of Europe and America were growing in strength. Yet Marx spoke of the germs of class-conflict inherent in Capitalism, of the rising proletariat which would one day overthrow the bourgeoisie. He spoke of the contradictions inherent in Capitalist economy, of the competition, trade rivalry and the chaotic production which would one day lead to a series of crises in capitalist industry, of periods of boom followed by periods of trade depression increasing with time in their effect and range. The dominant and rising bourgeoisie of those days could well afford to ignore Marx and his 'gloomy' prophesies. When Marx died his followers could be counted on one's fingers.

Now, while Marx had laid down the general laws of the evolution of Capitalism, its final collapse and the ultimate triumph of socialism, he had never implied that Socialism would come in different countries in their order of industrial development. He had even made it quite clear that in Imperialist countries it would be possible for the capitalists to throw the burden of capitalist economy into their colonies, to placate the workers of their own country by throwing to them occasional morsels, reforms, and, through the creation of a reformist labour aristocracy, to prevent the growth of militant class struggle, all through the merciless exploitation of the colonial masses. Thus speaking of England Marx said, "the issue of the struggle of the British working class, the question of socialism in England, cannot be considered apart from the national liberation of the peoples of the Empire. "Thus the struggle of the workers for Bread, Freedom and Power, must develop sooner or later in every capitalist country. It may be delayed in a particular country, but it is inevitable.

The early and unfettered development of Capitalism in the U.S.A. the enormous untouched resources of her territory, and lastly a vigorous Imperialist policy of colonial conquest and expansion, had given American Capitalism a great fillip and advantage over the other capitalist countries. This had led to a comparatively better conditions of living for the working class of America, with higher wages, less unemployment and a prolonged period of apparent prosperity in American industry. This, again was responsible for the slow development of the class struggle in America, for the absence of any organised and effective Trade Unionism and for the low level of political consciousness of the workers in America.

Since 1929, however, which year marks the highest point in the industrial production in America, capitalist America, in common with all the other Capitalist countries of the world, has been in the grip of a trade depression and industrial crisis. Unempoyment has increased by leaps and bounds, the wages of workers have fallen considerably and with the enforced shortening of hours in the working week the intensity of labour has increased considerably.

This downward trend in industrial production has been checked to some extent during the last three years by America's active participation in the armaments race. The heavy industries, such as Machinery, Machine tools, iron and steel have consequently all registered an increase in production. There has also been a corresponding increase in the production of Motor and Aero engines, Textiles and Boots and Shoes. This has ushered in a period of recovery, and a steady fall in unemployment. The rearmament Boom, with the consequential rise in prices of goods, has, however, also brought in its trail an increase in the cost of living. So that although there has been an increase in the profits of the capitalssts, with the increased productivity and intensity of labour and the increased cost of living the condition of the workers has all along steadily deteriorated.

These continuous attacks on the standards of living were bound to be resisted by the American workers. Recent years have seen a tremendous growth in the class consciousness of the workers of America and the birth of a militant Trade-Unionism. American labour is today on the turning point. So far the only form of organisation known to the American workers were the craft guilds and company unions in isolated factories. The workers soon found out how ineffective these organisations were in winning any real and material benefits for them, in winning for them employment and higher wages. Not being linked up together in big and effective Trade Unions, the isolated struggles of the workers were, in the beginning, easily crushed by the bosses with the help of the police, blacklegs and gangsters. The workers soon learnt the value of well conducted and widely organised agitation through effective and powerful Trade-Unions, the value of lightening strikes throughout the industry as the only effective weapon for bringing pressure upon the bosses in fighting for their economic demands. It did not take long for the workers to create the basis for such effective organisations in all industries, and today such militant Trade Unions have been formed in the automobile, flat glass, ship building, rubber, electrical, oil, steel and other industries, with a rapidly growing membership of hundreds of thousands. In the automobile centre, Detroit, for example, the trade union membership rose from 40,000 to 300,000 in the course of three months. It would be more correct to say that labour organisation in America has definitely turned from Craft Unionism to militant Trade Unionism.

An interesting development in this

sharpening of the class struggle in America has been the crop of strikes which have suddenly flooded American industry from one end of the country to another. In certain industries the bosses had never heard of such a thing as strike. To day organised strikes in industries are the order of the day. The American workers are rather partial to the 'Stay-in' form of Strike, which in their own country they call a 'Sit—down' strike. The lead was given by the workers of the 'General Motors' in a bitterly fought and successful strike which is still fresh in the minds of the workers. This was followed up by sit—down strikes in several other industries which spread with a surprising rapidity. In Detroit, for example, sit—down strikes occured in the cigar, bakery, metal manufacture, hotels, bus transport, trucks, taxis, publishing, packing and aluminium trades. Among other centres affected are Chicago, with the largest concentration of industry and the second largest steel centre in U.S.A., Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Illinois, New Jersey, Michigan and Ohio.

Another interesting feature of the American strikes is the large number of women and boys that have taken part in these strikes. It was thought at one time that young girls and boys who generally come from agricultural and backward rural districts would never think of organising themselves for fighting for better conditions. This illusion has been completely shattered. In the chain of 'Five and ten cent' stores of Messers Woolworth, where young girls of 16 to 21 years are employed at very low wages, the call to strike was spontaneously and universally answered by practically the whole chain of stores, and the militant spirit, discipline and comradeship of the young girls have evoked the admiration of old and experienced unionists.

These strikes have been organised by the Committee for Industrial Organisation (C.I.O.) which was formed after a group of Militant Unions had been suspended from the reformist American Federation of Labour for taking recourse to Trade Unionism as a means of organising the basic mass production industries. The bosses who have been taken completely unawares, are meeting this onward rush of the workers by the old method of creating confusion and splitting their ranks. There are always 'labour leaders' to be found to do their dirty work. In this case the man was William Green, president of the American Federation of Labour, who at the height of the strike wave issued a statement calling upon the workers to desist from taking part in the 'illegal' sit-down strikes, and warning them of the action which the 'public' would take against this 'seizure' of property by passing legislation to check and curb unionism. Green's statement was particularly helpful to the bosses coming, as it did, at the exact moment when damage suits were pending in American courts against the sit—down strikers and attorneys were arguing for eviction rulings.

With the passage of time, however, the strike wave has grown in range and volume, and with it has grown the blind fury and rage of the Capitalists. The recent press reports from America speak of several violent clashes between the strikers and the strike-breakers backed by hooligans and armed police. Thus a news item dated Washington, June 18th. speaks of the extreme brutality used by the police in battling with the strikers of the Republic Steel Company of chicago. According to a statement issued by Senator Thomas, "The strikers offered no resistence. It, was a one-sided fight, if it could be called a fight at all." "He added that men were shot in the back and at least one woman was clubbed. Again a press message from Cleveland dated June 22nd. states that the American "battle of steel" continues tensely as Government mediators strive desperately, hither to

una'fectively, to find a settlement of a strike which involves one hundred thousand men in seven States, and which has already taken a toll of 12 dead and 221 injurned. According to another New York message dated June 21, the committee of the industrial organisation leaders has telegraped to President Roosevelt warning him that any attempt to open the gates will automatically bring terrific voilence bloodshed, and concludes, "We urge you immediately to intervene at this critical hour to avoid the calamity of a disaster that Ohio may remember for decades." Meanwhile at the request of the Mediation Board the Governor of Ohio had ordered 4,800 troops to the vicinity of the factories for disarming the civil population!

This only shows a foretaste of what awaits the workers in a bourgeois—regime, should they endeavour to organise themselves for the amelioration of their immediate economic grievances. But the workers cannot be intimidated by these gangster methods. The sit-down strikes of the American workers will smash through the spy organisations black-legs and other coercive measures of the American bosses. The workers of America are now wide-awake. Nothing can prevent them from marching from strength to strength, from victory to victory.

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PACIFICATION OF THE TRIBES

By. B. S. R.

The War in Waziristan now being waged by the British against frontier tribes is not, according to modern standards, a major war, but still, even by modern standards, it *is* a war, and what is more, a war conducted with all the horrors of modern warfare. It is not easy to find out much about this war, since we are only supplied with those details that the military authorities think it advisable to publish. Nevertheless this tribal "pacification" that is going on is a matter of national and international importance; it is important to know that this is how the "Pax Britannica" is being spread, that the British, for all their protestations in favour of peace, are even now engaged in a predatory war, and that the British public who genuinely desire peace and abhor the horrors of war, are allowing themselves to be deceived into silence by their generals and statesmen, who consider that the bombing and shooting of tribes within their own territories is justifiable for reasons of imperial strategy. Moreover it is extremely important to understand the real motives behind the recent martial activity on the N. W. F. and elsewhere on the frontiers of British India, because when the true significance of these movements is understood, it is possible to understand more clearly the position which India itself (and therefore the Indian struggle for freedom also) plays on the stage of world affairs and the reaction of British imperialism to them.

A War of Occupation

As far as can be gathered from the excessively meagre accounts of the warfare now going on in Waziristan, aeroplanes, are being used in conjunction with the ordinary army; instead of sporadic raids the tactics used are more of a sustained advance. The present war though making use of the air arm and its death-dealing destructiveness, is a war of penetration and occupation. This does not necessarily mean that the land being now occupied will be formally annexed; once the "pacification" has taken place, no doubt the troops will withdraw, but the after effects of this penetration and occupation are a strengthening of the tactical position of British Imperalism the further humiliation and subjugation of the tribes and the creation of the conditions for immediate military occupation if it becomes necessary of the territory which is now the scene of fighting. Roads are built, bridges constructed, camp sites prepared and the whole country surveyed for military purposes, with the sole idea that at a moment's notice actual occupation may be effected by the British army. At the same time the tribesmen are disarmed, are forced to pay punitive taxes, to give security and to bring themselves under the dominion of the british invaders.

The official story of the incidents which led to the invasion are not very illuminating. The Faqir of Ipi, who appears to be leading and inspiring the opposition to British imperial invasion, is described as a " fanatic " and the official circles seem to think that this description in itself conveys full justification for the invasion; there is in addition a good deal of talk about " hostile laskhars". But this fanaticism and this hostility are the effect rather than the cause of the trouble. The Faqir has become a fanatical

fighter for his country and his tribe, and the lashkars have become hostile just because they are being attacked and invaded. British Imperialism cannot excuse its penetration and occupation by pointing to the fanatical and hostile opposition of those who are defending their country against such invasion. To do so is absurd and not unlike Franco's assertion that those, who are fighting to save the lawful government in Spain, are the rebels and the breakers of the peace. But even supposing the Faqir had been "fanatical" before or the lashkars hostile, for which there would in all conscience have been good cause, still by what right, other than the right of the strong to bully the weak, can the British invade the neighbouring tribes merely because they are unfriendly? If Hitler is fanatical and unfriendly towards the U.S.S.R., or if Goebbels and his tribe pollute the air with their abuse of Russia, does that justify the Soviet army making an armed attack on Germany? If France, or French people, on the Rhineland appear unfriendly to the Germans over the border, does that justify a German attack on French soil? Of course not; however weak and vacillating international law may be; we do still know that international public opinion retain sufficient sense and decency to assert the principle that mere abuse, mere "unfriendless" is not an excuse for one country attacking another. The whole of British public opinion may be shocked to the core by happenings in Spain, and by the inhuman wiping out of the civil population of Guernice. But are not such canons of moral indignation to be applied to the systematic bombing of unarmed civilian village on the frontier. The official communiques make no pretence even that these villages are actively implicated in the war; they admit that they are "open" villages—i.e. unarmed and merely occupied by civil population; the only reason for bombing, is the "necessity" to terrorize the enemy. In fact it has now been said in the press that the gradual weakening of resistance of the tribes is due primarily not to the military success of the British troops but to the moral effect caused by "bombing" and the wholesale destruction of crops which has in parts brought about conditions of famine; women and children driven from their wretched hovels are dying of cold and starvation on the bare mountainside.

How Tribes are 'Pacified'

"But" say the Imperialists "this is not a war at all; it is a restoration of Law and Order in a troubled area of the Empire." Much good it does to the tribesmen who is shot down, or his wife and children bombed from the air, to tell him that "*This is not War.*" However much consolation it may bring to kind Bishops in England, or old ladies busily engaged in "good works" to know that there is no war on the N. W. Frontier, it is little consolation to the unarmed tribesman lying on the bare mountainside with his limbs blown to pieces and his family lylng dead around him, to know that this is nothing but "*pacification*".

But the imperial quibble that these invasions are not wars, however cynical and human it may appear to us, has served the British Empire well. What they want to pretend is that the N.W. Frontier tribes constitute a sort of No Man's Land; it is true that this No Man's Land is inhabited, but politically speaking they want to treat it as a vacuum. According as it is convenient to them they want to say that it is not part of the British Empire or that it is part of the Empire. The Second argument is used in order to assert any action taken is not war but merely the keeping of internal order. The first argument is used in order to deprive the tribes of may sort of administrative benefiits and also to

justify the use of military forces or, to put it in different words., if some conscientious League of Nations parson writes to the papers hinting that war has been declared on the frontier, and asking what is to be done about it, the answer is given that this is purely an internal affair of the British Empire ("pacification of the tribes"). If, however, in his innocent belief in logic and justice, he then asks whether bombing from the air is a recognized way of policing the Empire and keeping internal order, he is told that the tribes are not in the empire but are making an hostile attack from outside.

The extraordinary thing is that the imperialists are allowed to get away with the patently absurd and illogical sort of argument. Obviously. if the world has any sanity left, they can't get away with contradictory arguments for in the matter of declaration of war, according to international law, there can be no half-way-house, no compromise between two positions, (a) of war between two independent, and, legally speaking, equal nations, and (b) the enforcement of internal order by a sovereign power within the limits of its own territory. There is nothing between " external " and " internal " however hard you try to juggle with the laws of logic and geometry.

A the "Forward" Policy

The whole problem resolves itself into the well-known *forward* policy as opposed to the closed border policy. Both policies have been tried and both have their disadvantages. The question to be solved by British imperialists is (A) are we to advance our military frontier right up to the border of Afghanistan and incorporate the whole of the tribal area within the ordinary Indian Empire, or (B) are we to draw the line so as to leave between us and Afghanistan an area under British influence but nominally free and outside the limits and laws of British India.

Let us examine each proposition (*Advantages*) The tribes can be completely conquered; they can be disarmed; repressive laws can be introduced; rebels can be detained and imprisoned; police raj can be set up, and the whole area completely pacified; military and strategic roads and fortifications can be built right up to the frontier of Afghanistan.

On the other hand (*disadvantages*) the imperialists do not want to carry the border to Afghanistan, since that would inevitably bring them into conflict with the Afghans to whom many of the tribes profess allegiance rather than to the British; the result would be continual conflict with a power that is more really independent and which could not be pacified by serial bombardment without grave international complications; it would eliminate the buffer areas which can at present be bombed and ravaged without protest from the League of Nations; it would mean bringing into the Empire Tribes who never have and never will owe allegaince to the British, and who would always be plotting and intriguing with their friends over the border so as to embroil the British Empire with foreign states; it would, in fact, mean a rapid and serious worsening of relations with all those countries in central Asia who desire to keep the British as far away from their frontiers as possible. These tribal areas being poor and unexploitable, the financial return would be *nil*; on the other hand it wonld be necessary to give them some measure of administrative benefits, such as schools, hospitals, a limited franchise and a sort of constitution. Meagre as the rights enjoyed in British India are, it would be necessary to give such rights also to the tribes if the official frontier of the empire was pushed forward. To fail to do so would be to encourage disaffection and discontent, but on the other hand to do so, would be to bring them into contact with the rest of British India and to

substitute for military rule ordinary civil administration albeit a civil administration strongly tempered with the police lathi. The truth is that on the N. W Frontier, the British cannot afford, for reasons of strategic importance, to beat the sword into the ploughshare. Whatever the difficulties, *a No Man's Land* of hostile tribesmen, periodically ravaged by bombs and military expeditions, is preferable to incorporating the wild tribes within the official empire and bringing the British troops on the frontier face to face with a power which can and will owe no allegiance to Britain.

B. The Backward or "Closed Border Policy."

(*Advantages*) The tribal area remains a buffer area ; the tribes can be conveniently kept in order by military invasions and bombing; they can be kept split and at war with one another by the distribution of "allowance"; no administration or social services are necessary, nor is any "democracy" or constitution to be worked out; any connection or communication between the tribes and the people of British India can be forbidden. On the other hand (*disadvantages*) the highly strategic places occupied by the tribes cannot be supplied with military roads, camps and fortifications unless frequent wars are to be waged and a good deal of cost incurred. The tribesmen are naturally made more and more hostile by these numerous invasions and in the event of war are likely to give the British much trouble, and do all they can to have their revenge. They cannot be disarmed, nor can the policy of "pacification" by means of ordinances and repression be given full play ; in fact, though the area remains a buffer area, it also remains a source or potential danger and a constant nest of hostility.

The Essence of frontier Policy.

It will be seen that the problem that faces the British on the N. W. Frontier is the same as confronts them on every frontier of the Indian Empire. Recently military expeditions have been undertaken on the Burmo—Chinese frontier for the subjugation of the Wa States; we know also from recent articles in the press that a "*mission*" was sent to Lasha to hold conversation with the Tibetan authorities. We are not told what these conversations were about, but it does not require much intelligence to guess that the imperialists were begining to get a little frightened at the friendship between Tibet and China for Tushai Lhama is known to harbour friendly thoughts towards China. The "mission", no doubt, went to Lasha to assure the Tibetans that, if they refused to let the Tushai return to Lasha from China they would be assured of British armed support in case of need; if on the other hand they persisted in their friendship with the chinese—well, let them remember how the other frontier people are dealt with. Of course each frontier presents its own problem, and there is no doubt that the N. W Frontier is the most worrying to the imperialists, just because it is of supreme strategical importance and it is therefore supremely necessary to infringe upon the independence of the tribesmen by building roads and camps and setting one tribe against another by the system of granting allowances to the, "loyal".

For the present a sort of compromise between the *forward* and *closed border* policies has been accepted. The three geographical elements of the frontier problem, as the "Statesman" says, are the administered aress of Br. India; the tribal tracts lying beyond the limits of British India ; and the state of Afghanistan. Many of the tribes acknowledge no geographical boundaries and are equally at home on any side of any boundary that British Imperialism sees fit to invent for its own ends. The present policy is neither one thing or the other; it is not a *closed border* policy in so far

as the right to build roads is asserted, the right to demand certain tributes and fines, and the general right to overrun the area at will. On the other hand the imperialists make no attempt, as a normal rule to occupy the torritory up to the Durand line, there is no attempt, to introduce British Indian law and order, or to adminster the everyday life of the tribes. In other words the tribesman is kept entirely to his own fate so long as he admits the unofficial sovereignty of the British Army, allows his land to be confiscated for miltary roads, and remains "friendly". The problem becomes more difficult, however, when, as now he refuses the right of the British to dictate to him as an overlord dictating to a subject. The only answer the imperialst can think of, is to advocate occupying the territory up to Durand line, but this, for reasons already given, is not quite as easy or as desirable as at first sight it appears. Consequently, they prefer to compromise and to leave all definitions of policy quite vague and, on the one hand, pretend to the world that they are carrying on a justifiable war against a foreign and aggressive state, on the other, to turn to their critics and to say they are just keeping order amongst rebellious and fanatical tribes of the Empire. In the eyes of the world the British Imperialists have long ago abandoned logic and consistency, but the British public, pacifist though it be by nature still does not realize that the inhumanity that it deplores in Spain is pursued in North western India.

Training for the coming war

Just as the Fascists dub all the victims of their blood-lust "Communists" whether they be democrats, republicans, pacifists or just ordinary non-political people who wish to live a free and independant life, so the British imperialists seek to discredit the tribesmen who are fighting to preserve their independence, by calling them *bandits*, fanatics, dacoits, etc. It does not require the ingenuity of a Goering and his Reichstag Fire, to concoct a plausible incident as an excuse for reprisals. For British imperialism it is enough that some criminal abducts a girl, or some thief robs a shop, and thereafter with cynical disregard of their own ideas of justice, they can send a military force to take *reprisals*. This is indeed a queer idea either of international law or of internal administration. And all the subsequent acts of warfare that the tribes are driven to in defense of their rights are characterized as the criminal behaviour of ordinary brigands.

But, we may ask, if it is true that the present war was provoked by the British merely because they wanted to start an invasion and to "open up" the hinterland of the tribal areas, why did they choose this particular moment? Why, when imperial interests are most threatened in other parts of the world by the prospects of another world war in which Great Britain will not have command of the Mediterranean, do they select this time to carry their arms over the frontier and to exact bloody reprisals upon practically unarmed tribesmen? The answer to this question is that it is just because of the international situation and the threats of another world war, that Britain has to sharpen her weapons and consolidate her position by acts of aggression. Not only does the tribal war give valuable practice and experience to the British bombers and modern engines of war at the expense of lives that "do not matter" and in a war "that is not a war"; but more important from the imperial strategic point of view, the present campaign is an attempt to defeat a potential enemy before general hostilities begin. It is a well known fact that the British realize that India can in the long run only be kept down and pacified by force of arms. It is equally well known that the frontier tribesmen never have and never will freely admit the overlordship of the British. In the event of a war therefore, when every

available man in the army will be required on the main fronts, it is essential for British interests that both India and the tribes should be from the very beginning "pacified." For this purpose India itself has been supplied with a brand new slave constitution that has all the elements in it of a fascist dictatorship and which, as every one knows, can only be made to work by the use of ordinances and the police raj—both of which are in clear evidence to-day. On the other hand, for the tribesmen no new constitution is available, and the policy, therefore is to civilize them by means of bombs, to civilize them by military roads, to civilize them by camps and forts, to civilize them by killing their leaders and terrifyng their wives and children, so that when the next world war comes their country will be so well provided for with camps and strategic roads, and their morale so lowered by recent invasion, and their wealth so dissipated by aerial destruction, that quite a small force of troops will be able to" keep order". The present war is therefore a form of insurance against the future; it is an unjustifiable killing, now in one place, so that British troops will be available in larger numbers for more wholesale killing, elsewhere, at a later date. If this insurance policy is not taken out now, there is danger that in a few months time the Empire may find itself in the awkward position of being caught between two fires—hostile and untamed tribesmen in front, holding an unaccessible and roadless area, and behind a discontented people in revolt against their long period of slavery to British capitalist interests. At all costs therefore the tribes must be "pacified" and slaughtered *now*, before the general shaughter, for which millions of pounds of armaments are being prepared, starts.

Defence of British Prestige

In spite of fair words and fine boasts, it is an admitted fact now that the prestige and power of the British Empire is on the wane. No student of history can deny the—much less the Imperialists themselves. The colonies themselves have to be kept in order by larger and ever more ruthless police forces; the idea of progress towards democracy and self—Government is negated by the facts which we know—the ordinances and the repression of free speech and thought. At the same time in British *spheres of influence* (i.e. where the threat of force rather than actual police raj maintains the rights of the British to exploit), British influence is rapidly declining, and unless it is to die altogether and be superseded either by national self—government or by the influence of some other imperial power, it is necessary for the British imperialists to do what they are now doing on the N. W, Frontier; that is, it is necessary for them to enforce their "influence" by the use of arms and bombers and to make sure that their strategical occupation of the country can be effected at five minutes notice should the need arise. That is why 35 thousand troops, not to speak of air-bombers, are engaged in establishing British inflluence amongst the tribesmen and preparing the way by means of roads and camps for the eventual occupation of the territory should that become necessary in the interests of imperial strategy.

Civilisation by Socialism vs. Civilisation by Bombing

But what, it may be asked, are the countries whose foreign influence is causing all this panic amongst the imperilists? Even the most ardent militarist of the old type and the most bigotten anti-red does not today think there is any longer a " Russian menace". No one pretends that Soviet Russia has any aggressive intentions against Britain or anyone else. No, the real cause of panic is the realization that the peoples themselves, whether they be tribesmen, Afghans, Tibetans or natives of the Wa states

on the Indo-Chiese border, are breaking away from the shackles of British influence; they want to develope themselves freely and independently, without having to pay a tribute to British imperialism or to be involved in the wars and crises of British imperialism. For them the benefits to be gained from coming under the "influence" of imperial capitalism are small compared with the economic devastation and the political slavery which British imperialism in its decline has to impose on its subject peoples. Consequently, we find all these frontier people turning away from Britain and seeking to elaborate a national policy that fits in on terms of equality, with the policies of small neighbouring democratic or freedom-loving peoples. The people of the Wa States turn to the Chinese for friendship and economic co-operation; so do the Tibetan Govt. The tribesmen, too, turn away from Britain and look towards Afghanistan for friendship and cooperation, whilst Afghanistan itself strives hard to unloose the shackles of British influence and imperial intrigue, and to forge ahead on modern lines in friendship with Russia and other nearby free countries. And this is exactly where the menace of Soviet Russia *does* strike panic into imperial hearts; for the Afghans and the tribesmen over the frontier, seeking, to be free of British military rule, look across at what is happening in Russia; instead of civilization by bombs they see civilization by socialism; instead of increased depression, poverty and misery, they see growing prosperity, happiness and industrial wealth; instead of burden of the crises of capitalism being forced on to the shoulders of the people at the point of the bayonet they see free and independent republics advancing technically towards a fuller and better life; instead of black repression, and military occupation, they see peace and co-operation being held out to them on terms of equality. This is the menace that Socialist Russia holds over the head of the British Empire, a menace which threatens the capitalist world as a whole; and it is against this menace and to preserve British influence amongst the tribes and in Afghanistan that the present war is being waged.

To the people of central Asia the British flag is synonymous with plunder, slaughter and black repression; in their eyes to be brought within the sphere of British influence is tantamount to slavery and perpetual poverty and loss of rights. That is why they are fighting; that is why the Faqir of Ipi is a national hero leading a grim struggte against enormous odds, but confident in one thing only, that death or annihilation is better than submission to the greedy jaws of British imperialism.

If only they knew the truth, if only they were not blinded by lies and false propaganda, there is not one decent peace-loving and democratic Briton who would not denounce what is now going on in the frontier. On May 20th 200 hostages were taken (non-combatant) from amongst the Bizan Khel and Spenkari tribes after a general round-up. We are not told what happened to those hostages. Perhaps they met the fate of all hostages; the official reports do not say anything abount this. But we are told officially that an early end to the war may be expected because there is now a severe shortage of food in the tribal areas owing to the successful air operations (i. destruction of crop) and the banning of any trade caravans plying between non-combatant tribes and British India.

Whilst civilization is being destroyed in Spain by Franco and his fascist hirelings; whilst British imperialism aids and abets this destruction of Spanish civilization, hoping with the fascists to share in the plunder of exploiting an enslaved Spain; at

the same time a new form of civilization is being spread by British arms on the N W. Frontier; it is a civilization that is imposed with bombs and general slaughter of innocent women and children; it is a civilization that only fascists and imperialists understand or desire; it consists in murder and slavery, and like every inch of the conquered territories of the British Empire, it is built up with the blood of those who die fighting for the right to determine their own futures.

TRADE UNION FRONT

A. I. T. U. C.

Between Bombay and Delhi

By Chandravadan Shukla

June, 1936 was a memorable month in the Trade Union Movement of our country. Unity in the disunited and divergent ranks of the trade union movement was well nigh achieved. Unity-negotiations, even with the reluctant leadership of the Nationl federation of Trade Unions seemed to promise a fair start. As a result of the spirit of unity Bombay session of the Trade Union Congress achieved a remarkable measure of success. This evinced by the mighty assemblage of workers in Lal Maidan, at the time of the A.I.T.U.C. session, by the spirit of accomodation which easily surmounted little difficulties here and there.

Success of the session filled many a heart with future hopes. The working class regained their lost confidence. The session promised to give the Indian Working class an organised, devoted and sincere leadership in its day to day struggle.

Unfortunately the hopes that were raised have remained unfulfilled. During the course of the year, strike waves of different magnitudes have swept all over India. The ever worsening condition provoked lightening, spontaneous strikes most notable amongst them were those of B.N.Ry. workers' strike. But the struggles of the working class fizzled out and failed for want of organised leadership. Wherever workers held out, they did so because of their own strength and tenacity. The A.I.T.U.C. has signally failed in giving effective leadership to these struggles and has been unable to advance further, organisationally. It has failed to bring different sections of the workingclass within in its fold. The working class remain as shattered as ever before.

Why is this so? Why has the A.I.T.U.C. not been able to organise and lead the day to day struggles of the working class? Why were the tasks and hopes of its Bombay session not accomplished. It is necessary to go into the causes of the failure on the eve of Delhi and remedy the defeat.

The A.I.T.U.C. apparatus is in the hands of the "leftists." Amongst these leftists followers of Mr. Roy command a dominating position in

the A.I.T.U.C. by holding important offices. It was upto them to run this machinary and make it function properly. Instead, we find that even the office is not run regularly. The head office does not keep it self in proper touch with the provincial T.U.C.S. The affiliated unions do not know the existence of the head office except casually through news papers. Provincial T.U.C.S. dominated as they are by the followers of Mr. Roy, display the same miserable show. The affiliated unions do not receive any direction or organisational help. No attempt is made to increase the numerical and orgnisational strength of the body as well as its affiliated parts.

This is not a mere accident. The political philosophy advocated by Mr. Roy and his followers reflects itself in their attitude towards trade union work. They think that the Indian revolution would not be led by the working class it being "numerically small, orgnisationally weak, politically immature etc, but it would be led by a Multi-class leadership, represented by the multi-class organisation like National Congress. Hence the Workers should form the tail of the Congress and join the Congress individually and participate in the Anti-Imperialist fight led by the Congress It is necessary to radicalise the Congress to make the working class more concious politically. This could be best achieved by an effective demand for a proper representation of Workers and peasants through their own class organisations. In stead of this Mr. Roy advances the view that the workers should join the Congress individually- Apart from the danger that such a method would bring the workers under the right wing leadership of the Congress, there is the danger of weakening the Trade Union ranks, which are already thin, by transferring active working class elements from the trade union field to the Congress fold. This is actually what has happened. The "Royist" office bearers in the provincial and A.I.T.U.C. have together with their little groups of workers attended more to the Congress work than to the T.U.C. work consequently the T.U.C. has suffered and has become, more or less a defunct body.

Mr. Roy's analysis of the nature of the Indian struggle for Independence and the subordinate role that the working class is likely to play therein, goes a lame way in determining the attitude of his followers, as regards the workers and their class-organisations. Hence it is that they do not strive to strengthen the T.U.C.

Therefore the lethargy displayed by Messers. Roy & Co. in the T.U.C. is the logical outcome of their philosophy. Hence it is that inspite of the verbal acknowledgement of the necessity of strong class orgnisations of the workers and peasants, Mr. Roy and his followers have not contributed to the development of the T.U. Movement.

The Bombay session witnessed a unity of the left forces. But this was short lived. As soon as Mr. Roy was released, in stead of leading the united left forces he began kicking the Communists on one hand and the Congress socialists on the other. This set afoot once more and very vigourously the internal strife amongst the left forces and consequently trade union work suffered heavily. The followers of Roy began to pay greater attention to the Congress work and did not give time and energy to the T.U.C. Not only this but inspite of the tall talk of Unity, sharper divisions amongst the workers were created with the result that the workers were disgusted.

At the time of the provincial assembly elections another wedge was pushed resulting in the greater weakness of the T.U.C. Bombay provincial T.U.C. had decided to put up a candidate representing the Bombay

workers from the general constituency. This was turned down by the Parliamentary Board. Consequently in accordance with the resolution of the Bombay T. U. C. another independent candidate was set up. This man was supported by A.I.T.U.C. executive at Faizpur yet Messrs-Roy & Co, made counter propaganda, despite the decision of the A.I.T.U.C. This considerably weakened the position of the T.U.C. candidate and strengthened the hands of the reactionary candidate.

Bombay Congress Socialists who kept and keep themselves generally away from the trade union work, had also their own axe to grind. They joined hands with the adherents of Mr. Roy in the Chorus against T.U.C. protesting that the T.U.C. was persuing an anti-national and anti-united front policy by pitching its candidate against that of the Congress. The self made apostles of Unity knew not what unity means. The result of all this was to get a defeat by a very narrow margin.

Some of the other leftists who work in the T.U.C. are haunted by a curious notion that a revolutionary trade union can not have a mass membership. This notoin is firmly rooted in them. They consider it as an axiom self-evident and self-proved. This is another of the many tendencies that have contributed to make A.I.T.U.C. a weak body. It is clear that those comrades who are possessed of this mentality can not work in T.U.C. with necessary confidence. To a certain extent this sort of attitude becomes a cloak to cover up weakness with.

Many of the—trade union workers do not devote their time solely to the uion work and dable in all sorts of public activities. Divided energies cannot contribute to the organisational strength of T.U.C. or of any body. This Mentality prominently appearing on all fronts of fight has done immense harm especially to the Trade Union work which requires hard and steadfast patient day to day, work.

Another reason why A.I.T.U.C. has not developed is that too much stress is laid on the propaganda side of the work. It has been said that unions are mere propaganda bodies. This is true. Propaganda is no doubt necessary, for, politics and economics are not two water-tight compartments as Mr. Roy would have us believe. But mere propaganda in the day to day work becomes useless in building up strong Unions.

Inter-group fights and quarrels have also given their due quota in weakening the A.I.T.U.C. This disease has become known, acknowledged but not remedied. Quarrels arising out of difference in principles are easily understandable but besides this there are other types which arise out of personal factors, which must not and ought not to hamper work.

During the year after the Bombay session all these tendencies had had free play and the result is that the hopes raised by that session have not materialised. Some may feel that to remember sorrowful past is to cry over spilt milk. For it is only from the mistakes of the past and from the readiness to learn from the blunders and failures of the past that we can successfully build up the movement.

It is for the geniune fighters for the toiling millions of India to take stock of the year that is elapsed between Bombay and Delhi and to fight out tooth and nail all these harmful and undermining tendencies.

Let us hope that the Delhi session will be equal to the tasks that confront it.

THE STUDENT FRONT

Need for Organisation

By P. Krishnamurthy

Until quite recently the marxists have seriously neglected this important sphere of work. Nor can it be said that since we have applied ourselves to this task, our efforts have met with any very conspicuous success. Perhaps contrasted with the success of other Marxian Parties in the other colonial countries we should say that they have been conspicuous by their failure. We must ask ourselves "Why" "What must we do to remedy this defect?" We ask our comrades to contribute their ideas on this subject for future publication. A start is made here with criticism, we hope constructive on the All-India students confrence. Reports on the Students Conference at Lahore indicate that a good deal of confusion exists amongst comrades engaged in this work—confusion both in the matter of tactics of approach to the students especially those who are politically immature, and confusion also in the conception of what should be the nature and purpose of a student organisation.

At this Conference for example it was revealed that a number of comrades considered that a student organisation should be a non-political movement based on the economic grievances and demands of the students, while at the same time advancing the somewhat inconsistent theory that in colonial countries any form of student organisation will ultimately turn anti-imperialist. In other words organise the students on the basis of their grievances and in the course of time by some inner logic that organisation will become anti-imperialist. It is a nice idea but it is simply untrue to life if, for no other reason, than that the membership of such organisations is constantly changing. And also because "political development is by no means automatic. This, these comrades, no doubt, understand, while they also probably realise that an anti-Imperialist organisation means one which carries on an active struggle against Imperialism not and one that merely dislikes Imperialism.

So far, judging from the reports, we should all be agreed however inconistent their theoretical formulations of the question may be.

But it is from this point that these comrades seem to have taken a wrong turning which eventually landed them outside the conference altogether along with the loyalists.

Starting from the above point they seem to have conceived the idea that it only remains for them to "capture" the organisation, that is to say, its administrative posts and its Journal. Thereupon they seem to have set about the task of "capturing" it by merely trying to discredit the personal integrity of the existing office bearers, labelling them "careerists", and spreading suspicions that they were also embezzlers of the student's funds. It would be difficult to imagine a tactic more calculated to alienate the sympathy of the average student and this in fact is what it did.

Having then alienated the sympa-

thy of the other delegates these comrades went on to propose a certain method of election which they thought would be advantageous to themselves. Needless to say these proposals were rejected. Whereupon they got up and walked out of the Conference and were in their turn labelled "C.I.D. men" by the other delegates.

We refrain from further comment having no wish to "rub it in". These comrades have learned from experience the futility of such tactics.

We have all to learn from our mistakes and these comrades must learn from theirs.

Let us decide once and for all that whatever the organisation we cannot "capture" it by such methods. We cannot propagate Marxism by the methods of intrigue any more than you can teach physics to a class by giving it cups of tea nor an elephant to stand on its head merely by twisting its tail. Marxism is taught better through mass actions in the fields and streets.

Even if we succeed in discrediting the personal honesty of our opponent mere denunciation does not win support for our ideas or our aims.

To sum up then, the initial error seems to have been the idea that politics could or should be kept out of the student movement and then with the notion that methods of intrigue can replace serious and patient work amongst those whose confidence and support we want to win. Once this is won through day to day serious work posts and journal can not but come into the hands of those who gain such confidence and support from the mass of students. It was thus that these comrades arrived at a combination of exterme right opportunism in their conception of the nature of their task on the student front coupled with ultra leftist tactics.

What should be our approach to The Students?

First as to the nature and purpose of a student organisation.

While it is true that any organisation of students under Imperialism does tend to take on an Anti—Imperialist character the fact remains that any such organisation if it is to be an *effective force does require conscious active political guidance and direction.* Clearly it is impossible to arbitrarily limit its scope to the economic demands of the students. To do so would be to deny at the outset the very truths that we have to affirm.

This does not mean that we jump to the opposite extreme of trying to convert it into a Marxist organisation, by such methods as those described above. It does not even mean that we immediately try and force through the linking up of every partial demands of the students with *ultimate socialist slogans.*

But it does not mean that we are unworthy of being called Marxist, if we do not link up the struggle of the students for any genuine grievance—be it partial, economic, or political, with the struggle against bureaucracy, police voilence and British rule with the struggle for national freedom. Because are not those grievances the outcome of intense exploitation and oppression.

It means that we ourselves have got to have first of all a clearer understanding than anybody else of what the economic demands of the students really are, of the way in which they are related to the economic and social system in which we live. We have got to study the problem of unemployment. We have got to be able to convince our fellow students by careful studies—explanation at meetings, debates, conferences etc, that our analysis of their economic situation is fundamentally correct. *Partial demands we must be able to link up with the wider issues.*

We must be able to show them how Imperialism is really the dictatorship of British Finance capital, how this dictatorship affects India in general-India's system of production etc, how this in turn affects the question of unemployment.

We must be able to contrast the quality, the character, and cost of education under Imperial administration with that prevailing in democratic countries particularly in the Soviet Union. We must be able to link up those issues which most forcibly affect the students, suppression of liberty of thought, speech etc. with the basic character of Imperialism itself. We must be able to explain with concrete illustrations from student life the nature of the State in general and colonial state in particular; the function of education within the state, and in our case the distortion of history of the social sciences, of political economy in order to keep us ignorant of the extent to which our country is exploited by imperialism.

In short we must have a clear understanding of the nature of the society in which we live. We must be able to relate our knowledge to the needs of whatever group we are working with, if a student group with the particular problems of this group.

Then again our purpose is not merely to show the student how much better off he would be under another social system but to *demonstrate* in practice how he can best *fight* for his demands here and now, who are his real allies in the struggle etc. We must be in the forefront in organising this fight ourselves. Our primary task is not to capture an organisation at any cost and by any method, *our aim is to win the confidence of its members in the fight for their own demands.* It is not necessary to "capture" an organisation before leading a struggle. It is not even necessary that a strike or demonstration be conducted under the auspices of a particular organisation. Often under existing conditions it is both possible and advisable for these to be organised independently by an 'ad hoc' committee. In this way a struggle can be developed which will evoke a widespread response, provided we have worked correctly, beforehand. Naturally we cannot expect to lead a struggle without having worked for it.

Further we must encourage and help the students to find for themselves new and original methods of struggle suitable to local circumstances.

All this we can do not by methods of intrigue or the tactic of defaming our opponents, by walking out when we feel discouraged but by first of all having a clear understanding of our problems and then being able patiently and consistently to relate our knowledge to our own particular sphere of work.

Have our marxist student groups got this clear understanding? Do they meet and thoroughly discuss questions confronting the movements as opposed to the questions of how to discredit our opponents? Have we got that clarity and confidence in our ideas that we feel competent to meet all criticisms from those who oppose us? If so where is that burning conviction that clear and positive statement of our position which we look for in our comrades?

If we have not got that confidence then this can only mean (let us admit it frankly) that we need to go back and really get a grip on our own theoretical weapons, really get down to the fundamentals of what Marx and Lenin have to tell us about the nature and structure of the Society in which we live. Only when we have a thorough understanding ourselves shall we be able to lead others. Until then we shall go on walking out and the "careerists" will go marching on !

No comrade need feel any sense of shame in making such an admission if such is the case rather does it do credit to his marxist sense.

TEARS AND LAUGHTER

PUCK

The Government of Bengal is descending from the heights, and our Ministers will be with us once more, refreshed and recuperated by the cool air of the hills. One's sympaty goes out to these ponderous old landowners, upon whose shoulder the burden of responsible government has fallen and whose paltry recompense is only Rs. 2500 a month! It was not so bad for them in Darjeeling where, far removed from the public gaze, Sir Nazimuddin and his followers could while away the long and tedious mornings playing bridge. Having proved to his satisfaction that the Governor is constitutional and that the I.C.S. are perfectly willing to take the responsibility of making ministerial decisions, Sir Nazimuddin could with a clear conscience devote himself to the more serious matter of playing bridge. Besides, if any importuning visitor or over-zealous official sought to find the Hon'ble Minister in the day, why should the enquirer not wait upon the Hon'ble gentleman in the Sahebs' club? It all gives a good impression.

But not all of our Ministers found life so easy and pleasant; for some of them there was much coming and going, and large travelling allowance bills to be added up, as each Minister in turn paid a fleeting visit to his home, property of friends—but always of course on business!

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Talking about travelling allowance, reminds us that the new Government proposes to introduce as its first Bill a measure to grant to all the Members of the Assembly a fixed salary. Now no reasonable person can object to such a measure on principle, much less those who hope in the near future to see the true representatives of the poor man in the legislatures. Still, it does seem a little crude to makes this the first item of busiuess in the Assembly when the people of Bengal are starving and crying aloud for the relief of their grievances. It would have been a nobler and more patriotic gesture to postpone this personal issue until political prisoners had been released, the ordinances swept aside, free education introduced, or some of the urgent crying needs remedied. But of course the Huq Government has no intention of doing any of these things, because it can't;—it can't do anything new or valuable because it has struck a bargain with I.C.S and the Governor, a bargain of mutual support of the "*status quo*". There are other reasons for the new measure of salaries of members. Firstly, Fazlul Huq thinks that if, each member is paid a monthly salary he will not be so anxious to precipitate a general election by voting against the Government. He has as little respect for the political honesty of the elected representatives of the people, as they all have for his. Because he is determined to hang on to his Rs. 3000 per month through thick and thin, and at the cost of all his promises, he thinks lesser men will cast overboard their political principles for the sake of retaining an assured income of Rs. 250 per month.

But there is still something more behind this move, whilst it is proposed to give a salary to members, it is also proposed to stop granting them any allowances

for the days that they are on "duty" in the Assembly. Thus a man who comes from Chittagong and has to put up in Calcutta for the period of the Session will be recompensed for his expenses at exactly the same rate as a man who lives in Calcutta and has his residence there. Now we see the point in the decision of Huq Government to reopen the question of holding the Assembly session at Dacca. Knowing that the support for the Kwaja party is strongest in the East of Bengal it is intended to transfer the legislative centre from Calcutta to Dacca (at least for half the year), and simultaneously to cut off the daily allowances of members so that many of Government opponents, hailing from West Bengal and Calcutta, will either be prevented from attending by the cost involved, or, if they do attend, will be badly out of pocket.

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It is a long cry from Darjeeling to Paris, but here is a good story from France. Mussolini thought he would have a good joke, so he decided that his contribution to the Paris Peace Exhibition would be an outsize statue of himself. Of course one knows that Mussolini is firmly convinced that the only human figure worth reproducing in stone is his own; one knows that every picture on the walls of his private house is a picture of himself and that, consumed with maniacal pride, he bows down before his own image. But what one is at a loss to understand is exactly what connection a staute of Mussolini has with peace. However that was Mussolini's joke. Anyhow it was arrrnged that the Italian Ambassador in Paris should be present when the statue was ceremonially unpacked in Paris and placed in the place allotted to it. We are told that there was a grand assembly of uniformed official and of course all the non-official friends of fascism in Paris. Imagine, then, the surprise and horror, and the painful blushes of the noble Ambassador, when the statue was lifted high from its wooden crate by a crane, and was revealed to all, hanging aloft and covered from head to toe with bright red hammers and sickles. This was the joke of the Italian people.

EVENTS IN BOMBAY

The significance of this year's May Day lay in the growing urge for unity developing in the anti—imperialist camp. The B.P.T.U.C. took a bold step in realising this unity when it invited the B.P.C.C. along with the working class organisations to celebrate the the May Day. It is highly regrettable that the C.S.P. alone refused united demonstration on the ground that the T.U.C. had not given satisfactory explanation with regard to certain incidents that took place during the Election campaign.

The participation of the B.P.C.C. in the May Day demonstration, however, was not effective. Nothing had been done to explain to the Congress masses the significance of the May Day and as a result only a handful of Congressmen attended the meetings and procession. The working class leaders also had held very few preparatory meetings to ensure mass participation. Four meetings were organised on May Day—3 in the city and one at Kurla—the attendance was far from satisfactory and so were the speeches. May Day, traditionally the day of international solidarity of the working class, must be today in India, also a day of national unity against foreign rule. Though the

resolutions passed at the meetings were comprehensive and of real United National Front character, the speeches did not bring out this specific aspect of the United May Day demonstration. The Royists, ever ready with their disruptive tactics, took up an ultra—left attitude and dubbed the decision of the T.U.C. to have United May Day with the Congress 'opportunistic' and 'class—collaborationist.'

Kurla showed how a genuine United Front movement can be developed on local civic demands, drawing even those sections that are politically inactive. Under the initiative of the leaders of the Kurla G.K.U. an agitation was started with the demand for re—establishment of Local self—Government in Kurla and a Citizens' Committee was formed, consisting of Hindus as well as Muslims, working class leaders, Congressmen and individual democratic minded people.

In January 1937, this demand had been made but as yet no mass movement had been developed on its basis. The working class leaders came forward as the initiators of the fight for democratic rights and the movement began to gather volume and strength.

A Democratic Front with Mr. Pereira as President and Com. Jhambekar as General Secretary was formed with representatives of various organisations.

Another mass meeting under three flags (The National Flag, the Red Flag and Muslim Flag) was organised and was a big success. Com. Jhambekar explained in this meeting the significance of the struggle for civic Rights and also why the working class is fighting in the forefront for this demand. The movement is daily gaining strength.

The Congress organisations in the Province have, generally speaking been lulled into inactivity after the 1st of April. Mr. Kher the Parliamentarian leader of the Congress, has been touring the province and has issued a series of statements ostensibly with the object of clarifying the Congress attitude towards Ministry acceptance but they have created more confusion than clarity. Lord Brabourne in his Belgaum speech regretted the Congress attitude, praised the 'patriotism and courage' of the 'interim' ministers and assured his goodwill and cooperation to the majority party if it accepted ministry, making it clear however that he could not divest himself of his special powers. Mr. Kher in a press interview declared, "If Lord Brabourne thinks, he will not be required to interfere with the Congress programme, as indicated in the resolution laid before him, why then he had merely to say it-nay less he has merely to dismiss his ministers, *not even promise not to interfere* when differences arise" (our Italics.)

The statement is significant as it shows the trend of the Congress Right. Already the A. I. C. C. demand for'non-interference' has been relegated to the background and in its stead emphasis is being laid on 'dismissal and not resignation' a formula not even hinted at the A. I. C. C. meeting at Delhi. And it is not Mr. Kher alone who is doing this. Mr. Rajagopalchari, Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram all are interpreting their demands in this same way. It is abundantly clear that the Right wing is as, or probably even more, eager than the Govt. to arrive at a compromise and occupy the ministerial Gadi. The Congress rank and file and even local leaders are strangely indifferent and unpurturbed at this conscious drive towards constitutionalism. They are waiting for July, when it appears the Legislatures would meet. Meanwhile a statement signed by 106 (out of a total of 201) members of the Upper and Lower Houses expressing no confidence in the interim ministers, has been sent to the Governor.

THE C. S. P. But even more remarkable than the indifference of the average Congressman is the self com-

placence of the Congress Socialists. Two Provincial Socialist Conferences (at Dohad in Gujrat and at Karad in Maharashtra) took place in quick succession the former at the end of April, and the latter in the begining of May, The concrete tasks of the Left movement-the re-building of the United Front between the C. S. P. and the organised working class on the basis of a searching analysis of the causes that led to the breakdown, the activisation of the Congress bodies and their closer cooperation with working class and peasant organisations, the strengthening of the C. S. P. itself, evolving concrete methods to check the apparently aimless but nevertheless sure and steady rightist drift—these burning problems were not even tackled. At Dohad Com. Masani satisfied himself with the declaration, "Always in the history of India the Haigs have had the better of Lothians". We have just had the latest instance and the stupidity of the Govt. has come to our rescue and the net result is satisfactory. "With great pride he gave a list of the Party's achievements" 'placing socialism on the political map of India', 'developing the nascent Peasant movement' and 'bringing organised Labour out of the rut of isolation into living contact with the national movement'. He did not think it worthwhile to say what to do here and now, how to end the existing stagnation (to call it deadlock is self-deception), how to re-build the unity between the C. S. P. and organised working class. Perhaps he thought these to be minor problems not worthy of his attention. Comrade Meher Ali's 'lead' at Maharashtra C. S. P. conference was hardly more encouraging. 'When the history of present times comes to be written, the discriminating historian will mark out the birth of the Congress Socialist Party as one of the most important events of recent years'. The most serious weakness of the Maharashtra Party, its utter failure to build up an independent Party organisation, even as effective as in Bombay and Gujarat, was not touched at all. The Royists, who occupied important positions in the Maharashtra C. S. P., one of them was the Secretary of the Party, true to their disruptive traditions, had just before the Conference resigned from the Party, thereby hoping to sabotage the Conference. This act of the Royists showed all the more glaringly the internal organisational weakness of the C. S. P. Instead of evolving ways and means to overcome this weakness particularly with respect to the Royists Com. Meher Ali contended himself with the declaration, "All attempts directed towards weakening the hold of the Party are bound to end in failure, in your province as elsewhere, for the Party stands today for a political line whose correctness has been repeatedly vindicated." Even granting that the C. S. P. political line is correct, Com. Meher Ali seemed to have forgotten that a correct line alone cannot strengthen the hold of a Party over the masses. Organisational consolida tion, correct United Front tactics on each specific issue are needed for that.

Both the Conferences, especially the Dohad Conference showed the agitational influence of C.S.P. At Dohad over 5000, including many peasants attended the session, at Karad but for the distuptive tactics of Royists, the Conference would have been far better attended than it actually was.

Meanwhile undeterred by the inevitable fate in store for them when the Legislatures meet, the *Interim Ministers* are busy with their 'Programme'. The Programme appears quite ambitious—in any case a vast improvement on the stud-bull 'programme' of Lord Linlithgow. They demand 125 lacs of rupees and in exchange promise introduction of free and compulsory primary education, special scholarships for depressed classes and Muslims, schools in every village with population of 1000 and more, relief to cultivator from any land tenure system which operates

harshly, reduction of land revenue lightening the burden of debt, irriga-tion, co-operative movement, settlement of industrial disputes, recognition of Trade Unions, better housing, in brief every conceivable measure. Along with the programme the Ministry has issued an appeal :—"The Council earnestly invites all classes and sections in the Presidency, whether political or otherwise, to lend their helping hand and co-operation in this great task so that the First year of provincial autonomy in Bombay might bring hope and cheer in the homes of the worker and peasant, might herald the birth of new life and opportunities for all".

Unfortunately, none takes the programme seriously, and the appeal has evoked little response. No wonder, Mr. Jamnadas Metha, said to be the author of the programme, has lost his temper.

Mr. Jamnadas, has from the time of the formation of ministry been the butt of public ridicule. While other ministers, Sir Cooper and Kamble are allowed to go unmolested, black flag demonstrations are organised against Mr. Metha wherever he goes. Naturally he feels indignant and he gave vent to his bitterness when presiding over the Democrates Conference at Panvel in Kolaba. He repudiated the baseless insinuation that he and his worthy colleagues were puppets and declared that 98 per cent puppets were to be found in Congress ranks. The Conference, by the way, had to be held under police protection and only about 200 people were allowed to be present. Thousands with black flags organised a march to the Conference but the procession was banned by the police. A huge meeting was organised to condemn the Puppet Ministries. Mr. Nariman and Com. Patwardhan addrerssed the meeting.

Panvel showed how popular hatred against the ministerial traitors can be organised to develop the movement and the Congress high command exactly because it is aware of potentiality and wants to avoid mass action depreceates these anti-ministsy demonstrations.

The Working Class leader, after the failure to re-establish United Front relations with the C.S.P. in connection with May Day demonstrations, made practically no efforts in that direction. This was partly because of the departure of Comrades Masani, Meher Ali and Asoka Metha for Almorah which left no C.S.P. leader in Bombay with whom negotiations could be carried on. But the more important reason is that they (The T.U. leaders) too do not feel particulary enthusiastic about the United Front today. Their experience of Com. Masani has not been very happy and in Bombay they have learned to identify the C.S.P. with Masani. Some of them realise the absolute necessity of the re-establishment of United Front between the C.S.P and the TUC and are prepared to make every effort in that direction but they are powerless unless Com. Masani alters his methods.

THE MAZDOOR SABHA ELECTIONS

(From our Cawnpore Correspondent)

The annual elections of the Cawnpore Mazdoor Sabha, the most powerful labour union in our city, have just been concluded.

They have revealed two things clearly : a desire for unity and united struggle in the rank and file and the growth of the strength of the Marxists, despite regular arrests of the best Marxist trade unionists.

The election campaign was initiated by the Marxists, who in an appeal issued in the beginning of March asked the workers to strengthen the union by electing all the active workers to the Executive of the Union, irrespective of their affiliations. The election appeal said "These elections are being held at a time when we are faced with an increasingly harsh offensive of the capitalists. All the groups that stand for resisting this offensive must be allowed to dominate it." This appeal was welcomed by the rank and file workers of all the groups and they prepared a list of active people who should be elected to the Executive Committee. All agreed that comrade Sant Singh alias Md. Yusuf be elected General Secretary. But still a certain section which was opposed to this unity move put up Mr. Gopinath Singh for the Secretary-ship.

On the day of the elections the supporters of Comrade Yusuf organised a procession of Mazdoor Sabha members from the Parade grounds. The procession terminated at Gwaltoli, where the elections were to take place and where the Mazdoor Sabha office is situated. The elections began and the President and Vice-president were elected unanimously. When the voting for the Secretaryship began comrade Yusuf had an overwhelming majority. Yet the supporters of Mr, Gopi Nath Singh demanded a division, which proved an eye-opener. These people then objected on the ground that certain non-members were present in the hall. The chairman Mr. Hariharnath Shastri gave them time to write out their objections. But they staged a walk-out. The President after a few minutes fearing that there might be a quarrel between the two parties adjourned the elections and left the meeting inspite of the workers' requesting him to continue the meeting.

When he had left, comrade Sharma, organising secretary of the U,P, Trade Union Congress, was elected president and conducted the elections to a close. Comrade Yusuf was elected the General Secretary, comrades Raja Ram Shastri. Suraj Prasad Avasthi, Santosh Chandra Kapur and Zakir Husain Zaidi were elected assistant secretaries ; Mr. Ram Asrey Treasurer ; and forty other members of the Executive Committee were also elected.

The returning officer first refused to recognise the validity of these elections ; but he and other important labour leaders felt that another election would be undesirable and harmful to the best interests of the movement. They persuaded the people to withdraw their names and the election results were finally announced. All the peole elected on the 9th May last with only one exception have been declared elected.

A remarkable thing in the elections was the insistence of the Marxists on a United Front Executive representing all the groups. Even when Mr. Gopi

Nath Singh and Sjt. Hariharnath Shastri left the hall and they elected people from their groups; though the Marxists were in a position to elect an Executive of their own choice.

A Brutal Attack on Comrade Sant Singh

Cawnpore has been the scene of an incident which affects the whole Trade Union Movement in India, since it concerns the right of Workers to form their own Trade Unions, without the use of goonda methods of violence and the hiring of goondas for physical assault by the capitalists.

Comrade Sant Singh alias Yusuf, who was externed last July from the Bombay Presidency and a few months later from Delhi, was brutally attacked at the gates of the Lakshmi Rattan Cotton Mills on the 9th May last. The mill is, owned by a prominent Congress leader of Cawnpore, The mill is known for its system of fines and harrasment of workers. The four loom system in Cawnpore was first started in this mill, and when the system spread there were strong protests and strikes. Recently there was a partial strike in the Lakshmi Ratan Cotton Mills, lasting for three days, and the employers became anxious to prevent any labour workers approaching their employees. Workers of the Mazdoor Sabha who went to the mill gates to organise gate meetings were harassed by Goondas employed by the owners. These people did not allow workers to gather to listen to the speeches, and the workers further were threatened that any workers attending gate meetings would be dismissed. This together with an effecient spy system made Trade Union work extremely difficult. Comrade Yusuf was prominent in all the gate meetings and succeded in organising them despite the goondas.

This savage and cowardly attack on sant singh has been resented by the entire working class in Cawnpore, and has been condemned by an influential section of the city Congressmen. The meetings organised at the gates on that and subsequent days were addressed by Pt. Balkrishna Sharma and other Congress leaders, together with all important labour leaders. Further the city Congress Committee was urged to take action. At the gate meetings organised by the Mazdoor sabha the importance of the issue has been explained by, Sjt Harihar Nath Shastri, and others who made it clear that this was an attack on the democratic rights of the workers to organise themselves in Trade Unions.

One of the most striking features of this incident, and the subsequent campaign, has been the unity displayed by all groups interested in the improvement of the conditions of the workers of Cawnpore, which in the past, unfortunately, has been notorious for the disunion among such groups. It is only when all such groups unite together against a common evil, that the evil can be overcome.

Unity is Strength ?

BOOK REVIEWS

Voltaire: **Fragments on India.** Translated by Freda Bedi (Contemporary India Lahore, 1937. pp x, 90. Rs 5.)

The original of this interesting book is an eighteenth century selection from Voltaire's works, which had never been reprinted and had dropped almost out of the cognisance even of scholars, but was discovered by chance in Berlin by Mr Bedi. Mrs Bedi has now translated and edited it, and it appears in a handsome and well printed, if rather expensive form.

It is called, after the original, "Fragments", but except perhaps for the first chapter or two it is a continuous history of the French post at Pondichery up to its capture in 1761, with special attention to the career of Lally, and remarks about Indian civilisation and things in general.

Voltaire made some mistakes, and the book tells us, I imagine, nothing that is not obtainable from the standard sources. But it is not for history that it should be read. The events of those days in India were momentous. The struggle of Britain and France for Indian and world empire was being decided, and in Voltaire's time it was going clearly in Britain's favour. It was already fairly evident who was to be the paramount power in this sub—continent.

What did Voltaire think of it all? He evidently admires the Brahmins. but contemplates without emotion their fallen state. The better soldiers will always win. He has of course a down on the Jesuits, apparently not without cause. We find no trace of French patriotic regret at Lally's defeat; nor any suggestion that the conquest of India by Europeans would be beneficial, or harmful, or even important. He allows himself few generalisations, except on national characters, which puzzle him; and on the motives of the Europeans in India, which are only too plain. Though he believed in progress, voltaire seems unconcerned with general causes. History is a network of the desires, plans, battles, mishaps, strengths and weaknesses of men; and most of all apparently, the last. There is no drama in history, only irony.

Typical of the eighteenth century, and typically French. Those accustomed to greater "profoundity" may dismiss it as superficial. But at least he did not mistake pious humbug or wish-fulfilment for fact.

P. S.

"Struggle in Spain" by B. P. L. F. Freda. M. Bedi. (Published by The Lahore Students' Union, Lahore)

Price 4 as.

Every progressive-minded person would welcome the move of the Lahore Students' Union in inaugurating a series of short pamphlets, "The voice of Youth."

This series, as the foreward to the first pamphlet says "will be primarily for students, and mostly by students; or else by those, who though old in age are young in zeal and spirit." The foreword continues, "In the voice of youth" we shall try to combine the passionate fervour of youth with the penetrating analysis of radicals, and present it as something full of vigour and fire; something which could mirror the hopes and aspiration of young India"

"The struggle in spain" written by B.P.L. and Freda M. Bedi, is the first of this valuable series of pamphlets. "The struggle in spain" is brief and to the point- But it is outstandingly brilliant, combining in itself an historical survey of the background of the spanish struggle, an acute analysis of

the forces fighting in spain, and an eloquent description of the atrocities of the Fascist murderers.

"The struggle in spain" has been published by the Lahore students' Union just when, after the brilliant success of the Popular Front, the ruthlessness of the fascists was about to dishearten the forces of socialism and Democracy all over the world. But now the work of the Lahore Students' Union will help in arousing the opinion of youth to come to the aid of the heroic fighters of spain. M. S.

Books Received.

(1) Some economic and financial aspects of British Rule in India. by Z. A Ahmad.

(2) Karl Marx—letters on India. by Fredar M. Bedi.

(3) Land Taxation in India. by Maneklal H. Vakil.

(4) Five plays by Harindranath chattopadyaya.

(5) Students Call of the Bombay Students Federation.

NOTES AND NEWS

The General Secretary, Lahore Students Union has sent the following statement to us :—

"We have received a letter from the Secretary, Punjab Congress Socialist Party asking us whether the Lahore Students Union or the Punjab Students Union has anything to do with the proposed Punjab Youth Conference in Sialkot under the Presidenship of Mr. M.N. Roy,

I can say with authority that the Lahore Students' Union is not concerned in any way with the proposed Conference and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Punjab Students' Union I can say that the matter has never been brought before the Provincial body. The part Mr, M. N. Roy is playing in side-tracking the vital issues which face the anti-imperialist forces is well known to all. The organizers of the said Conference can expect no co-operation from the Lahore Students' Union or the Punjab Students Union.

Meanwhile Mr. M. N. Roy would do well to make an intelligent guess at the kind of reception which Punjabi youth intends to give him."

Triumph of Reformism.

The day for which Mr. Satyamurthy has lived for during the last three years has at last dawned—the working committee of the congress has decided to end its policy of wobbling of the last three months and decided to accept office. They do not feel that the Secretary of State or the Viceroy have given the necessary assurance demanded but somehow they *feel* that the Governors will find it difficult to resort to their extraordinary powers !—though of course there is nothing to support this theory. How they are going to Combat the new act and work it for implementing the constructive programme of the election manifesto is a thing which they alone can understand. For you cannot work it and wreck it at the same time.

What Mr. Roy has learnt.

On the 7th, December, 1936. Mr. Roy said—"The fight against Imperialism must be carried on on all fronts, utilise the various forces... offices could be accepted under certain conditions."

And yet again on 24th Feb 1937 He stated..."Possession of ministerial offices does not carry with it effective control over the executive machinery which is the monopoly... We should not forget how the orders issued by the ministers were disregarded even by the district magistrates... Let us not be lured in the ridiculous position where we shall have to shoulder the responsibility of administration without political power."

Again at the Delhi Convention he voted against the amendment moved by Comrade Jayaprakash Narayan.

On the 9th of April, after the assurances were refused he issued a statement in which he said that "any search for a formula of reconciliation must be deprecated. That would only encourge imperialist intransigence.!!

Again he said instead of the way indicated by the Faizpur Resolution, the Congress is drifting towards neo—Constitutionalism, ... unless Imperialism is incredibly stupid, the Congress men will be in office, having condemned it for years as utterly worthless. Have we come to such a pass?

And then the final somersault !

He tabled a resolution in the U.P. Congress Committee suggesting acceptance of office. Finally in his letter to Mahatma Gandhi. "It is discrediting for the Congress to *shirk responsibility*...in six provinces where they have a Majority Congress should accept office."

Yes, lived long and learnt only the art of a chameleon.

The New Act and Repression

Anyone looking into the record of the achievement of the newly set up provincial Governments can see that as far as the general policy of repression is concerned, there is nothing new about it. On the contrary as if to give us a foretaste of what the New Government is like—we have internments, arrests, gag orders, in ever increasing numbers. The latest victims of this repressive policy being Comrades S. S. Zaheer, and Y. Meherally. The trial of Comrade Zaheer is going on at Unao, while Comrade Meherally is undergoing imprisonment of 6 months at Cannanore. The crime of Comrade Meherally was that he wanted to preach to the Moplas of Malabar the message of the Congress. But the Government which claims to be the protector of the Minorities has the monopoly of contact and the Congress cannot touch this preserve. Meherally rightly disobeyed this unjust order of the Dt. Magistrate of Malabar.

The Sad case of Huq

Talking of internments, one is reminded of the sad case of the Chief Minister Huq of Bengal. He was once a Congress man. But now he also has lived and learnt. He made bombastic promises to the electorate, the release of detenues, being one of the items. He also promised many things to the Jute Strikers, who on his assurance went back to work. But the Prosecutions started by Government during the strike against labour leaders are still going on inspite of the promise of withdrawal, and victimisation of workers is continuing inside the Jute Mills. On the top of this he came out with a statement that the release of detenues will not be in the interest of Public Peace—while the people of Bengal are clamouring for the release of all political prisoners and detenues. Mr. Huq represents the Proja—(People's) party—only there is no people behind him. He is behaving like the *good boy of* the government and this may in time be appreciated by his masters.

Madras Govt's latest on Kothapatam

The Reddy Government has issued a belated Communique to state that the school at Kottapatam gave instructions in the manufacture of bombs. We think that the Government were feeling shy to state their case before the courts. Or they would have trumpeted it in the court which convicted 16 of the accused in the Kottapattam school case. But they have come out with communique at a time when the organiser Com. Kameshwar Rao is still under trial, and the appeal of the 16 is still pending. Any body else coming out with such a statement before a trial was over, would have been tried for contempt of court. Are we to suppose that the Government is not bound down by their own laws or is it all the respect that they show to their own Courts of Law?

Books You Cannot Miss !

WORLD DEPRESSION By K. T. SHAH, Pages 271. Price Rs 1-8-0.
A Book of international importance surveying the genisis and causes of the world depression and suggesting daring methods to economic recovery. No Student, or Professor or a politician can afford to remain without a copy of this work.

Prof. K. T Shah is a well-known economist of international reputation and his latest work is an original contribution to the problem facing the world to-day.

IS IT A CRIME ? By H. D. RAJAH Pages 224. Price Re. 1
A social theme boldly conceived and splendidly portrayed. Mr. H. D. Rajah is well known as a public man and his work 'Is it a Crime?' has thrown light on many important baffling problems of our society and has given lead in solving them.

The Hindu Says:—"The Novel is indeed a clarion call to our reformers to sweep away the cob-webs of ages and to restore purity to our social system... Mr. Rajah has done a distinct service."

The Indian Express writes:—" The book is highly provocative of thought for those who have the welfare of society at heart. It is written in an easy and arresting style and deserves to be in the hands of all well-wishers of the nation and its forward march."

SPARKS FROM OUR LIFE By H. D. RAJAH, As 4.
In this small book, Mr. Rajah has given the best of life in the form of stories and interesting sketches. They are so true, that you will have a very interesting time of it when you go through them. Read and you will know what the book is !

EVOLUTION OF THE CONGRESS By U. C. GOPALAN, As. 4.
This book contains a short history of the Congress from its beginning up to the introduction of Montford reforms. Every student of history and politics ought to have a copy of the same.

LIFE OF DEVALERA (in Tamil) By BALAKUMAR, Price As. 6 only.
In this book, the life of De Valera, the great Irish Patriot who is now guiding the destinies of Ireland is given. It contains a graphic description of how Ireland fought for her freedom, the role Mr. De Valera played and the success Ireland achieved. It inspires you and sets you thinking. You cannot miss a copy.

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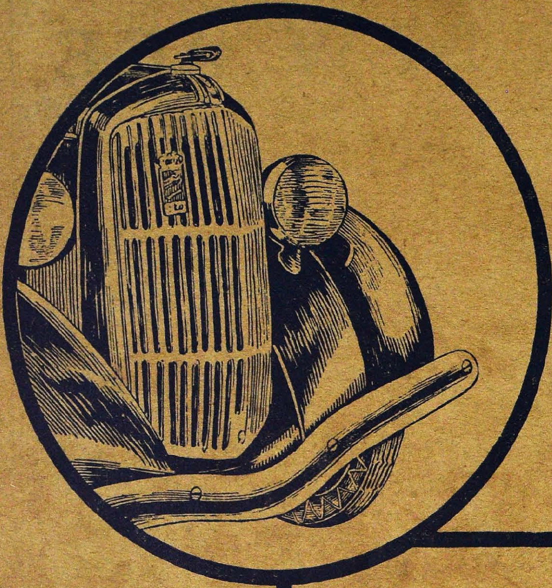

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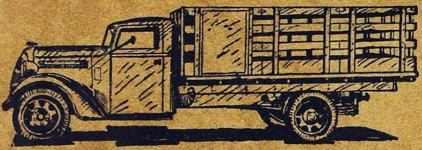

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